

REMARKS

Reconsideration of the restriction requirement is respectfully requested. The Examiner identified two groups of invention as follows:

Group I containing method claims 1, 9, 11, 17 and 21-23, classified in class 705, subclass 16; Group II containing method claims 2-8, 10, 12-16, 18-20 and 24-30, classified in class 705, subclass 40.

Applicant provisionally elects claims 1, 9, 11, 17 and 21-23 of Group I, with traverse.

Claim 1 recites, like the other independent claims, that the point-of-trade is the reverse vending machine. That is quite different from a point-of-sale, which is conventionally the cashier where you pay for purchases or receive some cash for coupons and vouchers.

Further, claim 1, as well as claim 9, relate to issuance of a lottery ticket which is also set forth in claims 2, 10 and 12.

In addition, claims 1 and 9 set forth that if the person has second thoughts about participating in the lottery or there is a failure in the communications link, then a return value receipt is issued.

Similarly, claims 2 and 10 define what will happen if a communications link cannot be established at the time the person has delivered empty packaging into the reverse vending machine and wants to participate in the lottery.

Claim 11 defines characteristics of the system in a situation where a person wants to participate in a lottery and there is a communication failure. Claim 11 thereby defines for the second alternative, item b) of claim 9, the issuance of a return value receipt instead.

Claim 12 defines another characteristic of the system in a situation where a person wants to participate in the lottery and there is a communications failure at the time the person has activated the operating means.

It is thus submitted that all claims define a single invention and can be searched together without additional efforts, e.g. by searching inventions related to reverse vending machines associated with the possibility of participating in a lottery.

It is further submitted that a complete search for the elected claims 1, 9, 11, 17 and 21-23 would also encompass a search of the class and subclass of the non-elected claims. Therefore, it is likely that the examination of the claims in Groups I – II can be made at the same time without substantial increase of the search effort.

Accordingly, it is believed that the guidelines of MPEP Section 803 as cited below should be followed,

“If the search and examination of all the claims in an application can be made without serious burden, the Examiner must examine them on the merits, even though they include claims to independent or distinct inventions.”

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully requested that the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn and that all of the claims in this application be subject to examination.

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